

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 ACDA-12 CIAE-00
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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 16884

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR EG KN KS
SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN-KOREAN RELATIONS

REF: (A) SEOUL 5396 (NOTAL), (B) SEOUL 5773,
- (C) SEOUL 6001 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY. DIRECTOR MFA ASIAN DEPARTMENT CLAIMS NORTH KOREAN TRADE DELEGATION DID NOT VISIT EGYPT IN JUNE. ROK SCHEDULED VISIT WAS POSTPONED BECAUSE MOMENT NOT "OPPORTUNE." MFA HAS AUTHORIZED ROK TO PARTICIPATE IN CAIRO TRADE FAIR NEXT YEAR. DIRECTOR KNEW NOTHING ABOUT SADAT MESSAGE TO NORTH KOREA IN CONNECTION WITH "ANTI-U.S. JOINT STRUGGLE MONTH." WE AGREE WITH KOREAN ASSESSMENT THAT GOE NOT ANXIOUS TO GET OUT IN FRONT IN INTERNATIONAL FORA IN SUPPORT OF ROK. END SUMMARY.

1. POLCOUNS MET WITH MFA ASIAN DIRECTOR AMBASSADOR OMAR SHARAF JULY 10 AND DISCUSSED REFTELS ON NORTH AND SOUTH KOREAN DELEGATIONS TO EGYPT AND ALLEGED EGYPTIAN GREETING TO NORTH KOREA ON OCCASION "ANTI-U.S. JOINT CONFIDENTIAL

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STRUGGLE MONTH." SHARAF WAS WILLING PROVIDE INFO AVAILABLE TO HIM BUT IT MAY NOT BE ENTIRE STORY.

2. DELEGATIONS. SHARAF SAID NORTH KOREAN TRADE DELEGATION, WHICH ALLEGEDLY VISITED CAIRO IN MID-JUNE (REF A), ONLY SPENT TIME AT CAIRO AIRPORT IN TRANSIT TO EITHER DAR ES SALAAM OR KHARTOUM. IN POL-

COUNS PRESENCE, SHARAF DOUBLE-CHECKED WITH HEAD MFA ECONOMIC DEPARTMENT WHO CONFIRMED DELEGATION HAD NOT DONE ANYTHING BUT TRANSIT EGYPT. THERE IS OF COURSE POSSIBILITY THAT DELEGATION VISITED MARINE TRANSPORT ADMINISTRATION (CAIRO 15985) WITHOUT MFA KNOWLEDGE. WE WILL CHECK WITH MARTRANS TO CONFIRM.

3. WITH REGARD TO SCHEDULED VISIT BY ROK DELEGATION HEADED BY YUN HA-JONG, SHARAF SAID THAT IT HAD INDEED BEEN POSTPONED BECAUSE HE PERSONALLY HAD ADVISED KOREAN CONSUL GENERAL YONG HUN HAHN THAT MOMENT NOT "OPPORTUNE." SHARAF HAD TOLD HAHN THAT ALL SENIOR MFA OFFICIALS WERE HEAVILY INVOLVED IN OAU, NAC, AND MID-EAST MATTERS OR OUT OF COUNTRY. SECONDLY, IT WAS DIFFICULT TIME FOR EGYPT TO SIDE WITH SOUTH KOREA, APPARENTLY BECAUSE OF UPCOMING NON-ALIGNED AND OAU MEETINGS. SHARAF SAID HE WAS GOOD FRIEND OF CONSUL GENERAL HAHN FROM THEIR DAYS IN PAKISTAN TOGETHER AND WAS WORKING WITHIN GOE FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF RESIDENT EGYPTIAN CONSUL GENERAL IN SEOUL; SO FAR WITHOUT SUCCESS. HE HAD, HOWEVER, SUCCEEDED IN OBTAINING AUTHORIZATION FOR SOUTH KOREA TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CAIRO TRADE FAIR IN 1979. HE CLAIMED HAHN WAS VERY PLEASED WITH THIS DEVELOPMENT.

4. CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE. SHARAF KNEW NOTHING ABOUT A SADAT MESSAGE TO NORTH KOREA IN CONNECTION WITH "ANTI-U.S. JOINT STRUGGLE MONTH" IN LATE JUNE. HE SAID IT
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WAS CONCEIVABLE THAT PRESIDENCY COULD HAVE SENT SUCH MESSAGE, IN IGNORANCE OF WHAT WAS BEING CELEBRATED, BUT EVEN THIS HE DOUBTED. (SHARAF ADDED PARENTHETICALLY THAT PRESIDENCY NEVER CLEARS SUCH PROTOCOL-TYPE MESSAGES WITH FOREIGN MINISTRY.) AMBASSADOR WILL ATTEMPT TO CLARIFY MATTER WITH PRESIDENCY DIRECTOR HASSAN KAMAL WHEN HE RETURNS FROM AUSTRIA.

5. RE ROK EFFORTS TO OBTAIN SATISFACTORY RES AT NAC IN BELGRADE, WE AGREE WITH KOREAN ASSESSMENT IN PARA 5 SEOUL 6001 THAT NOW IS NOT THE TIME TO PUSH GOE SINCE IT VITALLY INTERESTED IN AVOIDING ANY CRITICISM OF SADAT PEACE INITIATIVE IN INTERNATIONAL FORA AND WOULD NOT WANT TO EXPOSE ITS FLANKS. WE WOULD PUT THIS RATIONALE AHEAD OF BEING "INDEBTED" TO NORTH KOREA. EILTS

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